2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933)1954 AF12 North China AF12

751

It was believed that rain would fall whenever a snake's trail was seen on the road.

Hog cholera was avoided by attaching a small piece of red cloth to a stick and putting it at the gate of the pig sty.

If plague appeared in a village the farmers plucked peach twigs, made them into a bow, and tied them with five colored strings or thread. The bow with a piece of red cloth tied to it was hung on the family gateway.

Anyone who turned his bowl upside down on the table during a meal was sure to choke while eating.

789

Anyone who tore his clothing carelessly must not patch it himself when he was wearing it. He should get some member of his family or a friend to do it for him. While the mending was being done the owner of the garment should hold something in his mouth, like a chopstick or a piece of wheat straw. It was believed that if he did not do this, the owner would lose something.

If new paper was put on a window before the first of the 10th month, a small hole must be left in the corner until after the first of the 10th month. Ghosts and spirits were free to roam from the 15th of the seventh month until the first of the 10th month, when they were shut up for the winter by Ch'eng Huang, god of the city wall. If, when they were on their way back to the other world, the spirits should be unable to find a way out of a room they would bring disturbances and misfortune to the family living in the house.

To ward off evil spirits the farmers often erected a T'ai Shan stone at the corner of their house. This had a tiger's head at the top and five characters on the face of the stone. The geomancers said that the stone should be seven feet five inches in height and that it must be put up at the winter solstice.

The lions on top of the corner stones of the land along the road were regularly black with oil. Every carter that went by used his oil brush to feed the lion with oil and to brush his teeth. It was believed that those who did not feed the stone lions would have their axles broken.

Birth

844

When a child was born, news of the birth and presents were sent to the mother's family. Formerly a book was sent to announce the birth of a son and a bunch of flowers to announce the arrival of a daughter. At the time of our study, however, it was customary to send a book regard-

2:Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 AF12 North China AF12

844 less of the sex of the baby. The mother's family gave the bearer of the good news a tip of about 100 coppers and sent, by him, a return gift that was usually a basket of eggs.

846 Three days after the birth of a child, friends and relatives came to bring their congratulations. Many brought presents, generally food.
431 Members of the mother's family came and brought special food, such as eggs, wheat flour, or noodles for the mother and special clothes for the baby.

846 Nine days after the birth the father's family prepared a feast for their friends and relatives including the mother's mother, aunts, and other relatives. The guests brought gifts for the baby. Middle class families gave silver presents, bracelets, necklaces marked with the characters for good luck and long life, or silver coins. Workers' families generally gave money, about fifty coppers. This celebration on the ninth day apparently was the Ting Hsien equivalent of the first month celebration that was customary in other parts of China.

During the first month after birth no strangers or pregnant women were allowed to enter the mother's room, as it was believed that their presence would disturb the mother's milk. If a stranger or a pregnant woman should intrude, the danger could be avoided if the intruder immediately exchanged belts with the mother. Certain phrases were also reported to be tabu for the mother, as they were thought to make it difficult for her to nurse her child.

When a baby was one month old its maternal grandmother came to invite the mother and child to visit her family. According to custom the visit should be for one hundred days. On the way to her home the mother usually scattered a handful of grain, usually millet, or coins at each crossroads. This was to purchase the use of the road from the spirits, who, it was thought, must be placated lest they bring misfortune to the mother and child. Cash used to be used but as they gradually disappeared their place was taken by the ten cash coppers. One rich family was reported to have scattered silver dollars at the crossroads. This custom and belief appeared to be gradually losing their hold on the people.

852 When a child returned from this visit to its mother's home it was
302 customary to shave its head.

When a child was one year old a tray with a book, a bunch of flowers,
852 a piece of tile, and a small hoe, or a pair of scissors, if the child was a

3:Chao E-5 (1939-1941)1948 AF12 North Chira AF12

Space is too limited to allow going into further details of the question of law and social order.[16] It suffices to say that villagers know very little about law and yet they seldom commit crime. The backbone of the social order of P'ing-chiao-tsun is customary sanction and not laws promulgated by governments. While the family is a very important unit in the process of ordering and control, public opinions in the form of gossips among villagers are too strong for any one to neglect.

Sacred Order

The maintenance of a social order in P'ing-chiao-tsun depends upon forces which extend beyond the secular into the sacred. There is no greater disturbance in normal life aside from military attacks than what is called by the social anthropologists the "life crises" such as birth, marriage and death. In addition to these life crises, the uncertainty of agricultural production due to "water and wind" should be also mentioned. Both life crises and agricultural crises may disturb any existing equilibrium in the social structure, and some means must be provided to have it re-established. When all secular means fail man, he has to appeal to the mystic powers in the unseen world. He has to rescue life from death; so he has to depend on religion.[17]

The birth of a child is called a happy event. But mortality is high. Parents are busy with other businesses of life and their knowledge of child care is limited. Anxiety over the security of an infant, under such circumstances, is very high indeed. Here, religion comes to the rescue. Many ceremonies of a magico-religious nature are performed in certain intervals such as three days, one hundred days and one year after birth to assure the child's life. When even these magico-religious performances fail, it is the fate of man and not the failure of gods.

Marriage is also a happy event, but the newcomer may be a trouble-maker, and the union may not be approved by gods and ancestral spirits. Performances of a magico-religious nature are made before, during and after wedding. As mentioned previously, the

16 A paper on law and social order in P'ing-chiao-tsun is in preparation.

17 Bronislaw Malinowski, "Magic Science and Religion", in Science Religion and Reality, edited by Joseph Needham, New York, 1925, pp. 19-84; A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, The Andaman Islanders, A Study in Social Anthropology, Cambridge University Press, 1922.